



Jocassee Journal

Information and News about the Jocassee Gorges

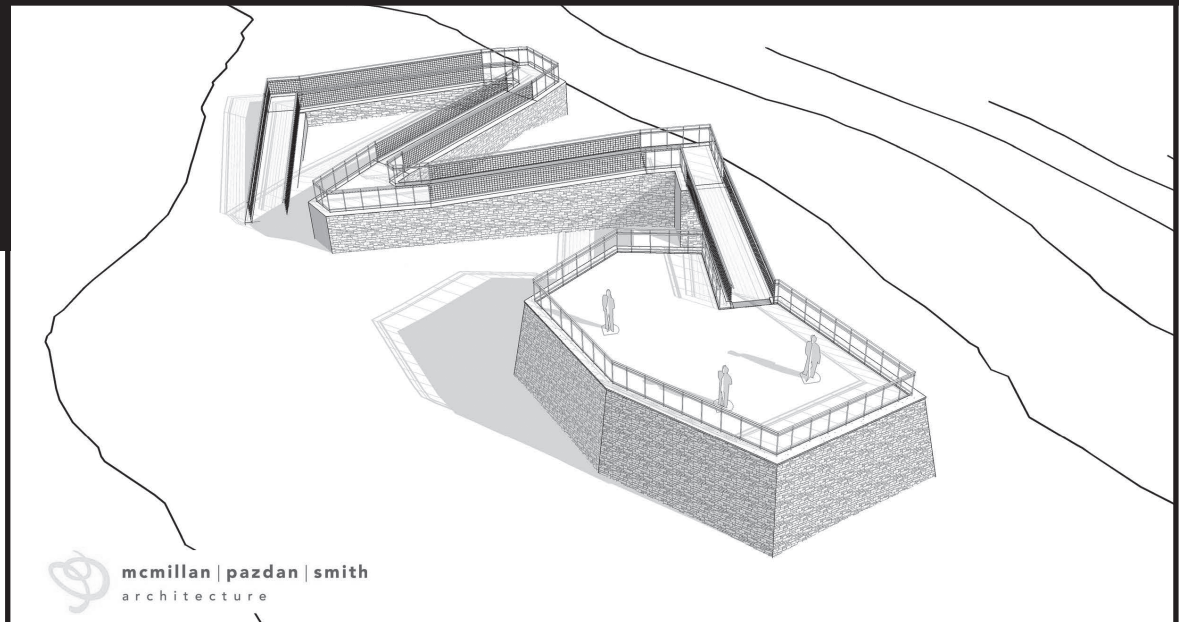


DNR

www.dnr.sc.gov

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This drawing by the Greenville architectural firm of McMillan Pazdan Smith shows the proposed viewing tower atop Sassafras Mountain, South Carolina's highest point at 3,553 feet.

Sassafras Mountain tower may get underway in late 2014, early 2015

The S.C. Department of Natural Resources tower project is moving forward, although in a different direction

A tall tower proposal has given way to a shorter, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant tower that will be more accessible to all visitors. The taller vegetation on top of Sassafras Mountain has been removed to provide a panoramic view. The top of Sassafras will be managed as a mountain meadow with grasses and herbaceous flowering plants, and the meadow will be maintained with prescribed fire every three to four years.

The S.C. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recently received a \$50,000 donation from The Felburn Foundation for the Sassafras tower project, and when Duke Energy provides \$350,000, which it committed as part of the Keowee-Toxaway relicensing agreement, a groundbreaking

will be held, in late winter of 2014 or spring of 2015.

The Harry Hampton Memorial Wildlife Fund started the fund-raising effort last year with a donation of \$25,000, an anonymous donor contributed \$40,000, and \$25,000 has been raised from the sale of engraved brick pavers, bringing the total Sassafras fund-raising effort to about \$490,000. Additional funds are being solicited from corporate and individual donors.

South Carolina residents and other admirers of Sassafras Mountain have a unique opportunity to take their place in Palmetto State history by placing brick pavers atop Sassafras, which helps raise funds for the

observation tower project. To purchase a brick, visit www.dnr.sc.gov and click on the Sassafras brick icon on the right-hand side of the page. Honor or memorialize a loved one by purchasing an engraved brick to be placed at the base of the observation tower and also help to make the highest point in South Carolina accessible to everyone. ❁



Visit www.dnr.sc.gov and click on the Sassafras brick icon to purchase a brick.

Pickens Clemson Extension agent wins state-wide conservation award

Pickens County Clemson Extension agent Cathy Reas Foster honored by South Carolina Wildlife Federation

Foster, a geologist by training, received the Education Award from the Wildlife Federation. She coordinates the Carolina Clear program, which educates communities about water quality, is a coordinator of the Upstate Master Naturalist program and serves on the boards of several environmental groups throughout the Upstate.

Cathy has worked with students, teachers and parents at Holly Springs Elementary School in Pickens County to construct a Woodland Rain Garden. She has also helped create and facilitate Lake Jocassee VIP (Volunteer, Improve and Preserve) Day events with the Friends of Jocassee group. Foster is a leader and educator who proves that conservation works best through building lasting partnerships.

The state-wide conservation awards event was sponsored by BMW Manufacturing, Duke Energy, Michelin North America Inc., Renewable Water Resources (ReWa), Spartanburg Water, Haile Gold Mine, Glen Raven Custom Fabrics, FUJIFILM Manufacturing



Cathy Foster



Cathy Reas Foster (left) and James Blake share a spot in the Clemson Extension Trailer at the 2014 Pickens Azalea Festival. (Photo by Katie Giacalone)

USA, SC Association of Counties, Palmetto Health, Joe Edens, Larry Faulkenberry, and Tom Milliken.

The mission of the South Carolina Wildlife Federation is to advocate for wildlife, habitat and the environment, educate citizens in the conservation ethic, and support outdoor traditions. More information can be obtained about the organization by visiting www.scwff.org or calling (803) 256-0670. ❁

Chastain receives historical award

Honored for Bully Mountain work

The Behethland Butler Chapter in Greenville presented the Historic Preservation Recognition Award to Dennis V. Chastain at The Greenville Woman's Club on Jan. 20.

The award and pin were presented by Chapter Regent Jean Patten and her grandchildren, Kalan and Cade Batson.

Chastain provided many years of volunteer research to obtain a historical marker for four U.S. Servicemen who were killed on active duty in the 1950 crash of an Air Force cargo plane on Bully Mountain. Chastain discovered the wreckage in the remote Jocassee Gorge area of Pickens many years ago during a hunting trip.

Chastain's love for his country and the families of the servicemen was an encouragement to keep him working for the historical marker, which culminated in a remembrance service on Bully Mountain in September 2013. Three descendants of the servicemen who perished in the crash attended the service. ❁



Dennis Chastain (third from left) received a historical preservation award in Greenville for his work on the Bully Mountain remembrance service. Chastain was accompanied at the ceremony by his wife, Jane (far right) and, from left, Martha Canata, of the Greenville Daughters of the American Revolution chapter, and Jean Patten, Behethland Butler Chapter regent.

Fire on the mountain!

Chimneytop Gap wildfire tests firefighters, will have positive impact on Jocassee Gorges wildlife habitat

Late Friday afternoon, April 11, S.C. Department of Natural Resources and S.C. Forestry Commission offices in northern Pickens County received phone call reports of smoke in the Rocky Bottom Area off US Highway 178. Ray Cassell, the Forestry Commission's Pickens County fire ranger, was first responder on the scene, and he confirmed that a wildfire was active near Rocky Bottom in the Chimneytop Gap area between Van Clayton Memorial Highway and US Highway 178. The fire was in difficult, rugged terrain, and it took Cassell's crew some time to walk into dangerous conditions after sunset to identify the location and extent of the fire. He immediately summoned backup support.

Ray Cassell, Jarrod Bruke, Trey Cox and Michael Weeks of the Forestry Commission, along with Mark Hall and staff from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), worked closely on logistics throughout the night, mapping the fire and predicting its progression. The Foothills Trail was scouted in the wildfire area at 3 a.m. Saturday to make sure no campers were there. All Pickens County fire departments and volunteer fire-fighting crews were placed on standby to protect homes and other structures near Rocky Bottom. Clemson University's Camp Hannon was on the northern edge of the fire. Camp Hannon was excluded from the burn area with a firebreak that was established with a crew using chainsaws, fire rakes, a leaf blower and other hand tools.

The Forestry Commission elected to use a "burn-out" method to contain the wildfire. Thus, early Saturday morning, a "fighting-fire-with-fire" technique was employed in which controlled fires were ignited along US Highway 178 and Van Clayton Memorial Highway to contain the wildfire and prevent its spread. Meanwhile,

DNR's Hall, the Jocassee Project manager, worked with ground crews to establish backup firebreaks just in case the fire escaped.


By late Saturday, the wildfire had been turned into a well-managed controlled fire. No structures in Rocky Bottom were affected, and safety zones were intentionally "blackened-out" with the controlled fires along the highways. More than 400 acres burned in the

area between Rocky Bottom, US Highway 178 and Van Clayton Memorial Highway. One footbridge on the Foothills Trail was partially consumed by the fire. The burned bridge was quickly removed and replaced by a Duke Energy contract trail maintenance crew.

Through expert communication and organization, the Forestry Commission took what might have been a disastrous situation and turned it into a properly managed controlled fire. Forestry Commission staff from as far away as Darlington, Lexington

and Orangeburg participated in the effort. Forestry Commission field crews, line workers, equipment operators and local volunteer firefighters worked long hours in unfamiliar, difficult mountainous conditions to make the operation a success.

"The fire will have a long-term positive impact on wildlife habitat and restoration of the ecosystem in general," Hall said. "The mountain ridges historically burned naturally on a regular basis. Many fire-intolerant species in the area will die and eventually be replaced with fire-tolerant species. We also expect some tree mortality to occur with smaller-diameter hardwoods such as red maple and yellow poplar."

The source of the Chimneytop Gap wildfire was not specifically identified, but it was likely started from a poorly tended camp fire by hikers in the area. There were no thunderstorms or lightning strikes in the area prior to the fire. Lightning is the most common cause of wildfires in the Jocassee area, according to Hall. 



A footbridge on the Foothills Trail was partially burned during the Chimneytop Gap wildfire. (Photo by Heyward Douglass)



Notchlip redhorse are native to lower elevation trout streams like Eastatoee River in northern Pickens County. They make spawning runs and congregate like salmon. (Photo by Tim Harris)

German carp in upstate streams? DNR fisheries biologist says ‘no’...

Pickens County angler has adventurous fishing trip on Eastatoee River

By Tim Harris

On a recent Sunday afternoon, I fished the delayed harvest section of the Eastatoee River at the Hemlock Hollow Angler Access area. A short walk upstream from where the access road intersects the river, I hooked into what I thought was going to be a GREAT trout. It made several strong runs and stayed deep in the pool – generally characteristic of a big Brown.

I played it for quite a while before bringing it to hand and was really surprised to see that it was (I thought) a German carp. As I fished my way upstream I saw quite a few more of them cruising in the sandy areas of deeper pools. It wasn't until I got up to the waterfall/slide area that I really saw just how many were present. It looked like a salmon run when I stepped into the gravel and spooked them. There must have been 30 or 40 “carp” holding there that probably averaged 20 inches in length.

I had never seen anything like this in a local

trout stream. Was it normal? Were these fish invasive? I had released the one that I landed-- was that the proper action, or should it have been removed? Considering that I trout fish quite a bit, and would like to protect their habitat, I felt it was my obligation to get some answers...

I contacted Dan Rankin, the S.C. Department of Natural Resources' regional fisheries biologist, to see if he could shed some light on the situation. Dan informed me that “German carp” are, indeed, non-native. However, the fish that I had landed was NOT a German carp. Rather, it was a sucker. More specifically, a notchlip redhorse. He went on to say that these fish are native to lower elevation trout streams like the Eastatoee, where they make spawning runs and congregate just like salmon.

So, what do you do if you hook into one of these unusual bottom-dwellers? My advice would be to enjoy the strong fight and release it unharmed to provide the same pleasure to another angler!

(Tim Harris is an Upstate native who enjoys visiting the Jocassee Gorges area with his wife and daughter.) ❁

Nine Times Forest protected

Top conservation priority achieved by Naturaland Trust, Upstate Forever with help from conservation partners

Naturaland Trust and Upstate Forever have succeeded in protecting one of South Carolina's most special places—the 1,648-acre Nine Times Forest in Pickens County. An ecological jewel, the property contains three mountains of stunning granite outcroppings as well as streams, creeks and stands of hardwoods. Located in close proximity to Jocassee Gorges, the tract also provides exceptional habitat for bear and other wildlife.

Last year Naturaland Trust and Upstate Forever negotiated an option to purchase the property from the owner, Crescent Communities, at a price of \$3,543,780 and then began seeking public and private support for the project.

The funding came together from four major sources. First, Naturaland Trust was selected to receive a grant from the U.S. Forest Service. The grant was awarded under the Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program in a highly competitive process. Only 10 grants were awarded nationwide, and Naturaland Trust and Upstate Forever's grant was one of only two in the Southeast.

Next, Fred and Alice Stanback, North Carolina conservationists who have been key supporters of efforts to protect important places in the South Carolina Blue Ridge, including Stumphouse Mountain, made a generous donation in honor of conservation visionary and founder of Naturaland Trust, Tommy Wyche.

Fred Stanback said, "Our contribution not only helps protect the Nine Times property but also honors Tommy Wyche for his 40 years of providing vision and leadership in protecting tens of thousands of acres in the Blue Ridge Mountains along the North Carolina-South Carolina state line."

In addition, Naturaland Trust and Upstate Forever reactivated a five-year-old grant application with the South Carolina Conservation Bank. The Bank's Board unanimously approved a \$1.5 million grant for the property, payable in two installments.

During this time, Duke Energy was negotiating the terms and conditions to be proposed for a new license for its Keowee-Toxaway Hydroelectric Project. As one of the conditions, Duke Energy recently provided \$1,044,000 for

the purchase of the Nine Times Forest.

"We're thrilled to support the preservation of this spectacular land," said Steve Jester, Duke Energy vice president of water strategy, hydro licensing and lake services. "Our objective throughout the relicensing process was to understand the community's priorities and find ways to support them. This is a fine example of how stakeholder partnerships can result in benefits that will be enjoyed for generations."

Naturaland Trust is now the owner of the property.


Open Space Institute (OSI) is providing a bridge loan to Naturaland Trust until all of the funding comes in from the other three sources. This is the second loan from OSI to Naturaland Trust in the past two years. The first helped secure nearly 300 acres along the Cherokee Foothills National Scenic Highway. Nate Berry, vice president for OSI, said, "We are thrilled to partner with Naturaland Trust again to protect the resources of this special area of the upstate."

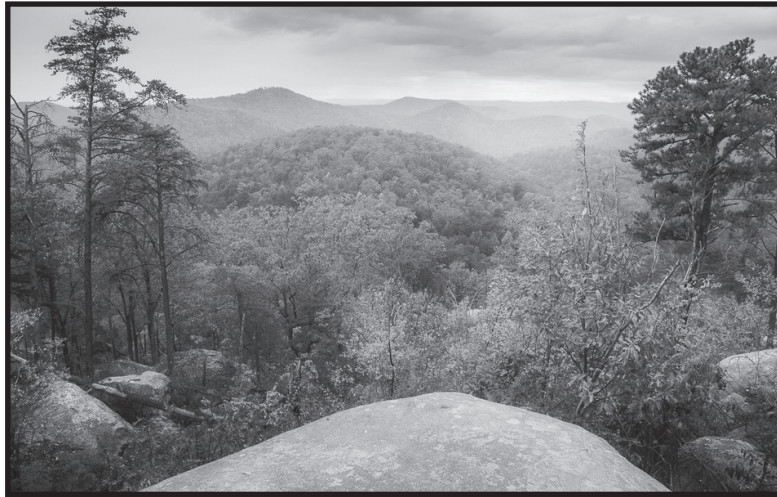
Frank Holleman, Naturaland Trust president, said: "The acquisition of the Nine Times Forest

is an historic gift to the Upstate of South Carolina and the protection of our Blue Ridge Mountains. These 1,648 acres contain three mountains, beautiful mountain streams, and forest expanses. We now have protected 2,300 acres of connected forest, forever."

The Nine Times Forest is one of the largest intact unprotected forests left in the Upstate. Several years ago, about 560 acres were protected through a broad-based effort, in which The Nature Conservancy, Naturaland Trust and Upstate Forever actively participated. That tract is now owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy. The Nine Times Forest adjoins The Nature Conservancy's preserve. In 2012, Naturaland Trust acquired more than 100 acres adjoining Nine Times Forest, providing an even larger natural area.

Brad Wyche, Upstate Forever executive director, said: "This is a spectacular achievement for conservation in South Carolina, and an amazing team of public and private partners made it happen. We were honored to be on the team."

Naturaland Trust and its partners are now working on a management plan for the Nine Times Forest that will include sustainable forestry, and passive recreational opportunities for the public. The property will be returned to the S.C. Department of Natural Resources' Wildlife Management Area (WMA) program for public hunting. 



Nine Times Forest in northern Pickens County has been protected thanks to a coalition of conservation partners.
(Photo by Mac Stone)

Lake Jocassee,

New book explores depths of history, features Upstate lake construction photos

What ultimately brought electricity to thousands of nearby residents forever changed the landscape of South Carolina's Jocassee Valley, and this transformation is explored in a new book by Debbie Fletcher, "Lake Jocassee," one of Arcadia Publishing's newest titles in its "Images of America" series.

In more than 200 vintage images, Fletcher recounts the dynamic changes that occurred to the peaceful Jocassee Valley when Duke Power Co. announced its Keowee-Toxaway Project in 1965. The book shows how the valley was prepped for flooding, featuring Duke Power's exclusive photographic account of the massive eight-year project to construct the Jocassee Dam.

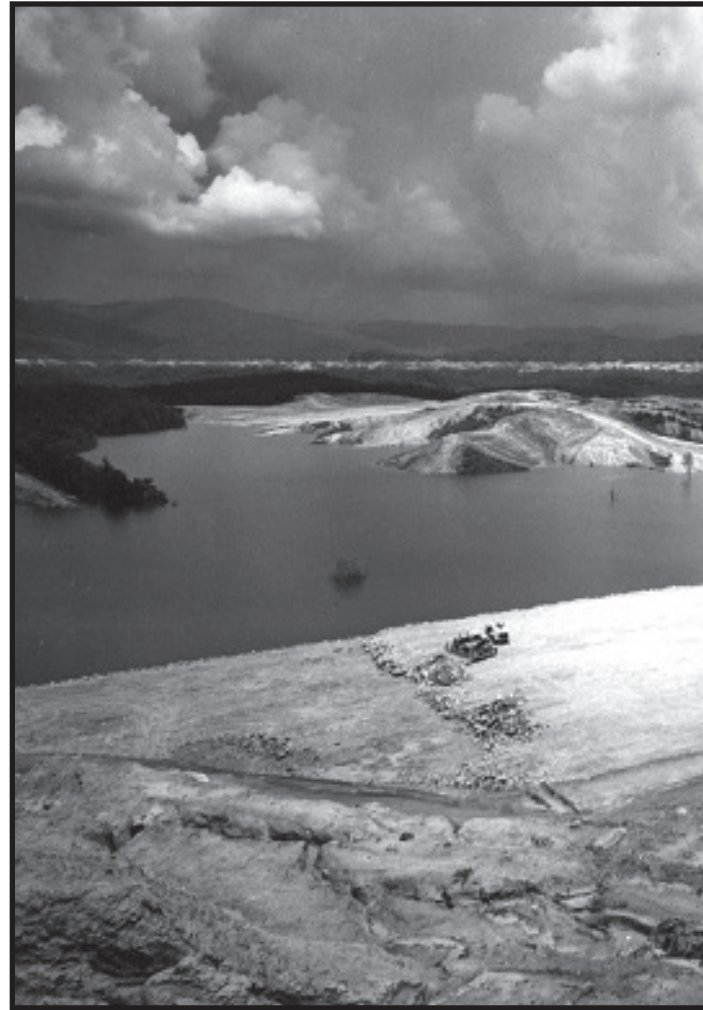
Today, while boaters and paddlers enjoy the surface of Lake Jocassee, hundreds of feet below the surface lay intact remains of Jocassee Valley. Fletcher laments, "When Jocassee Valley was lost, a true treasure was buried."

As a child, Fletcher enjoyed the Jocassee Valley with her family at Camp Jocassee and Attakulla Lodge. Today, she still visits the site of her family's homestead, waiting on the boat as deep divers explore her home below the surface waters of Lake Jocassee. Her personal memoir about her youth at Jocassee is chronicled in "Whippoorwill Farewell: Jocassee Remembered," which is available at www.JocasseeRemembered.com.

A native of Columbia, Fletcher's love of the beautiful Jocassee area was passed down by her mother, whose family was among the first white settlers in Jocassee Valley, now covered by Lake Jocassee. Fletcher brings a unique perspective to the subject of Lake Jocassee. She knows first-hand what lies beneath its deep waters. Having spent the summers of her youth at the family's Jocassee home and now as a scuba diver,



Every afternoon the entire Camp Jocassee for Girls walked a short way down the road to the swimming hole on the Whitewater River and a favorite activity was shooting down the rapids. (Photo courtesy of Brenda Foy Springfield.)



Construction on the Jocassee Dam continues as the lake is still standing on dry ground. (Photo courtesy of Duke Energy)

she has explored some of the Valley's underwater remnants, although she admits that diving in Jocassee also brings a kind of sadness to be so close, yet so far away from the Jocassee she loved. She enjoys providing lunch on the boat for the deep divers who explore her family's homestead Attakulla Lodge, which is mostly intact and lies in about 300 feet of water.

Fletcher enjoys writing about Jocassee and her love of the Valley. She is a member of the Friends of Jocassee and takes every opportunity to share the history of the Valley with others. When not adding to her extensive collection of Jocassee history, she enjoys painting scenes from Jocassee Valley.

She and her husband, Dave, have been married for 40 years and have two daughters, seven delightful grandchildren and three rescued dogs. She hopes that her new book will create a renewed interest in protecting and preserving the lands around Lake Jocassee.



"Lake Jocassee"

what lies beneath



fills in September 1971. The intake structures (right) are
energy Archives)

"Jocassee Valley has been completely obliterated," says Fletcher. "Barring a natural disaster, it will never be seen again. The land can no longer be walked on. The river can no longer be enjoyed. Jocassee is the classic example of 'they paved paradise and put up a parking lot.' So much was sacrificed to supply the electricity our growing population demands. I hope that readers are so impressed with the beauty of the lost Jocassee Valley that they will have a renewed respect and appreciation for Lake Jocassee and the surrounding area. We have been tasked with a great stewardship, that of caring for this priceless piece of real estate." I saw first-hand the destruction of Jocassee Valley. I don't think I could bear to see it happen again."

Chapter One: Buried Treasure

Once known as South Carolina's "Little Switzerland," Jocassee Valley was a peaceful, pristine valley tucked in between the Blue Ridge Mountain peaks named Bootleg, Double Springs, Fisher Knob, Hester, Limber Pole, and McKinney. Home to the

extremely rare and beautiful Oconee Bells, Jocassee was a lush valley with old forest growth, such as hemlocks, white pines, and red cedar. The copious amount of rainfall in the Jocassee area caused hydrangeas, mountain laurel, rhododendron, and honeysuckle to thrive. There was a single dirt road traversing the valley, bordering the Whitewater River. It was a perfect place for a Sunday afternoon picnic, a refreshing swim in the river, a solitary fishing trip, or a place of solitude to experience the silence and sounds of wildlife.



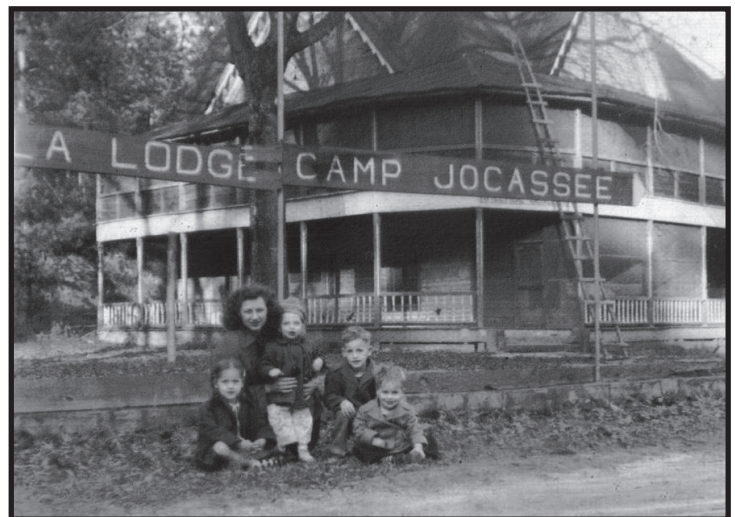
Debbie Fletcher

Once the domain of the Lower Cherokee Indians, whose chief was Attakullakulla, Jocassee Valley, meaning "place of the lost one," was named after the legendary, fictitious daughter of Attakullakulla. The Cherokee influence was reflected in names like Eastatoee, meaning "green birds," probably so named because of the Carolina parakeet that once resided in the valley; Keowee, meaning "place of the mulberry;" Toxaway, "place of thunder;" and Oconee, the "watery eyes of the hills." By the late 1700s, the Cherokees had abandoned their towns, mostly by force, and the area was inhabited by European settlers. The Henry Whitmire family is recorded as being one of the first permanent settlers in Jocassee. Henry Whitmire Jr. built the home that later became Attakulla Lodge. The lodge and accompanying lands stayed in the family until the valley was inundated. In fact, 22 acres of the land was still in the family's name for five years after Lake Jocassee was formed, when the Williams family (descendants of the Whitmires and Browns) finally settled with the power company.

When Jocassee Valley was lost, a true treasure was buried. "Lake Jocassee," \$21.99, Arcadia Publishing. Available at local retailers, online bookstores, through Arcadia Publishing at www.arcadiapublishing.com or (888) 313-2665, or at www.JocasseeRemembered.com.



book cover



Taken around 1948, this image shows one of many trips the Dodgens family made to Jocassee Valley. (Photo courtesy of Audi Dodgens)

In the footsteps of Andrew Ellicott

Party of historians seeks original boundary rock of famous surveyor in Jocassee

By Thomas Heard Robertson Jr.

"After much labor in cutting roads, we arrived at the top of Cane Creek Mountain," wrote Andrew Ellicott about his surveying expedition to the east Jocassee area in November 1811. More than two hundred years later, Dennis and Jane Chastain, local experts and outdoors enthusiasts, led our small party of surveyors and historians to the crest of Laurel Fork Mountain trying to follow in the famous astronomer's footsteps. Ellicott had a party of about eight men, while ours consisted of just three people: two surveyor/historians, Josh Lewis and Tom Robertson, and Ellicott biographer Bill Morton.

Ellicott was seeking the 35th parallel of north latitude, to find where it struck the Blue Ridge (Eastern Continental Divide) and thus establish the boundary line between Georgia and North Carolina. (South Carolina had previously ceded its lands west of the divide to the United States, which in turn had granted them to Georgia in exchange for other western lands.) In the end Ellicott found that the 35th was entirely south of the Blue Ridge and did not intersect the divide at all east of the Chattooga River. Thus there were no Georgia lands to be found anywhere in the vicinity. He then surveyed further to the west and set his now famous Ellicott's Rock on the Chattooga. Although he was the first to establish the common corner of Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina, and subsequent boundary commissioners also engraved rocks at the site, Ellicott's original rock has never been found.

En route to the Chattooga the 1811 survey party lugged a massive zenith sector instrument, six feet in radius, and a transit and equal altitude instrument to the top of the mountain referred to on maps these days as Laurel Fork Mountain or as Big Laurel locally. He built a temporary astronomical observatory and used his devices for observing the stars to establish the direction of true north and to determine the latitude of the place he called his "second position." Still too far north, he decided. So he extended a line directly west about 10 miles "on the arc of a

great circle to the most prominent and elevated mountain to the west," now appropriately called Ellicott Mountain, his "third position." To determine the distance over "broken and rough" terrain, he employed a triangulation technique, using a baseline 886.28 feet long along the top of Cane Creek Mountain. With this distance along the baseline and

measured angles at its ends to the summit of Ellicott Mountain, he used trigonometry to solve for the length of the long line to the west.

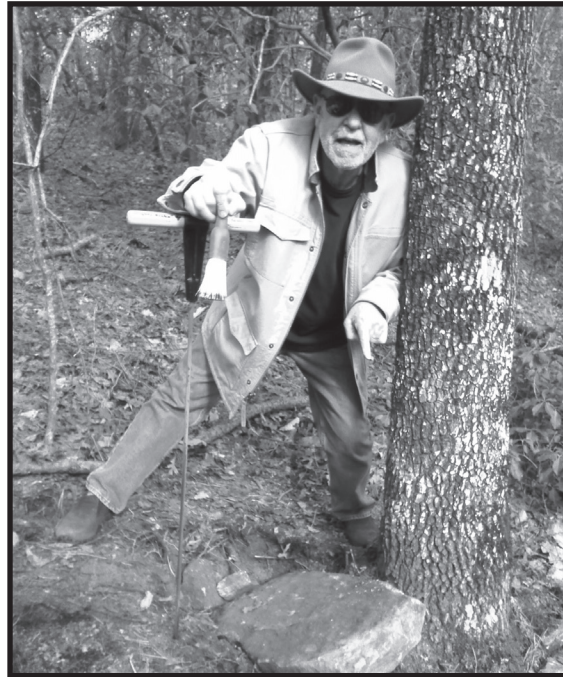
Ellicott wrote that he set marked stones on the north-south and east-west lines from his observatory. Our question was could any of those stones be found in their original places today? Finding a stone in its original position, and leaving it there, would be a more important discovery than simply finding the stones themselves. High accuracy measurements of their locations today would tell how accurate Ellicott's work was to begin with.

Our group had a much easier time getting to the observatory site than did Ellicott. We travelled to the remote site by jeep – albeit a long way -- via the ready-made Horsepasture Road. We carried instruments capable of making measurements similar to Ellicott's, only ours could fit in our pockets

– hand-held global positioning system (GPS) units. Like his, our devices also used observations on heavenly bodies to figure out where on earth we were, except that ours used signals from man-made satellites instead of star sightings. Our observations led us to places on the crest of the mountain where, sure enough, Ellicott Mountain loomed above other ridges far to the west. We felt confident we were pretty close to the renowned astronomer's footsteps.

We looked at a lot of stones that day and left not many of them unturned in place. Unfortunately, none showed any surveyor's mark. Modern road construction and timber operations have disturbed the area over the past two hundred years. But have they obliterated the footsteps of Ellicott? The question remains.

(Tom Robertson is a registered land surveyor, civil engineer, and planner engaged in private practice as president of Cranston Engineering Group P.C. of Augusta, Ga., and Bluffton.) ❁



Andrew Ellicott biographer Bill Morton inspects a stone in search of a boundary rock engraved by the legendary surveyor. (Photo by Tom Robertson)



Andrew Ellicott

Water 'N' Wildlife Day held by Friends of Jocassee

Conservation group has many unique activities planned in coming months

By Kay Wade

It's a beautiful thing, being a Friend. When the idea of organizing a Friends group to benefit Devils Fork State Park and the Jocassee Gorges area was first conceived a couple of years ago, a small handful of people worked together to make it happen. Today the group has over 60 memberships, and real progress is evident.

In May the Friends of Jocassee sponsored the first Water 'N' Wildlife Day at Devils Fork State Park. Friends and guests showed up early to work hard, eat well, and go home with a sense of accomplishment. Participants tackled a number of problems that too often fall in the category of "somebody ought to..." Duck nesting boxes were cleaned and repaired, work was done to "slow the flow" of water coming off the parking lot behind the park's office and store, bluebird and bat houses were erected to provide habitat for these important residents, and native plants were planted around the park office to establish a rain garden, create a Carolina Fence, beautify the entrance to the Oconee Bell Trail, and replace non-native trees that are being removed by the park staff. Some very creative Friends put their talents to use by painting a unique and beautiful rain barrel, making and painting toad houses for even more wildlife habitat, and putting together some interesting rain chains with beads and pine cones.

After a busy morning, participants gathered at one of the park's picnic shelters for a delicious pot luck lunch. Since this gathering also marked the first official meeting for the Friends of Jocassee organization, president Allan Boggs was on hand to address the business and many accomplishments of the group. Debbie Richardson Fletcher was the guest speaker. Debbie has just published her second book on Jocassee, titled "Lake Jocassee," which is part of the Images of America series. Debbie's family owned a portion of the upper part of Jocassee Valley before the lake was built, including Attakulla Lodge and Camp Jocassee. Her affection for the area is evident, and she praised the Friends group for the work they are doing to preserve, protect, and promote the natural and cultural resources of the Jocassee region.

The next major event sponsored by Friends of Jocassee will be held the second Saturday in September, Sept. 13. This will be the 4th annual Volunteer, Improve, and




A group of volunteers from the Clemson University Outdoor Lab paint toad houses during Water 'N' Wildlife Day at Devils Fork State Park.

Preserve Day, better known as VIP Day. It, too, will be a work day, focusing on trail work and cleaning up the shoreline and lake bottom of Lake Jocassee. Again, there will be food afterwards for hungry volunteers.

On the horizon following VIP Day are just-for-fun events that should go on everyone's calendar: the second annual 1st Day 5K and Loon Lunge is coming up on New Year's Day 2015, and the fun continues with another BellFest event on the second Saturday of March 2015.

One more very important chore the Friends of Jocassee have taken on is the cleaning up of trash along Jocassee Lake Road and Boone Creek Church Road. Under the guidelines of the Adopt-A-Highway program this six mile stretch of roadside is cleaned up four times every year, in March, June, September, and December. This is one place where many hands definitely make light work! The Friends are dedicated to keeping this entry way to Lake Jocassee cleaned up and looking good for the lake's many visitors. It is a big job, but hopefully the gentle persistence of the group will help boaters and drivers take more care in securing their trash before leaving the area.

If you haven't yet taken a moment to join the Friends of Jocassee, now is a great time to do so! Visit the website www.friendsofjocassee.org to join, and please put coming events on your to-do calendar. You will become part of a group who is making steady improvements around Lake Jocassee and the Jocassee Gorges. Come on, be a Friend! *(As co-owner/operator of Jocassee Lake Tours, Master Naturalist Kay Wade is frequently out on the beautiful waters of Lake Jocassee. She can be reached online at www.jocasseelaketours.com or by phone at (864) 280-5501.)* 



Girl Scout renovates campsite on Foothills

16-year-old completes 80-hour project for Gold Award with new benches, improved fire pits, better water source

By Katie Crane

Hello hikers! My name is Katie Crane and I have recently finished a project on the Foothills Trail in renovating a campsite near Bad Creek. This project was used as my Gold Award, which is the highest award that can be allocated to a Girl Scout. This project required 80 hours of work and dedication and is designed to help and assist others, the community, and the globe. The project required much work to improve camping conditions for hikers and was truly a worthy project by scouting standards. I enlisted family, friends, and Boy Scouts to help me with this project. It was a memorable and enjoyable experience for everybody involved.

(The campsite, located just outside the Whitewater River corridor, is for hikers using the Foothills Trail along the Whitewater River corridor, where there is no camping allowed.)

First, we built three benches, sturdy and strong, that were placed beside the two fire pits at the campsite. Water seal was placed on these benches to preserve them for generations to come. The fire pits were also cleaned out and mortar and rocks were placed around the edges, securing and beautifying them. Steps were put into three of the trails, particularly the main one, which was very steep. The steps were made of available logs and were secured by dirt. These steps were meant to assist hikers going up and down the hill, especially during wet weather where the hill would be slippery and also to help



Heyward Douglass (left), executive director of the Foothills Trail Conference, admires the new benches built by Girl Scout Katie Crane at a campsite on the Foothills Trail near the Whitewater River corridor.

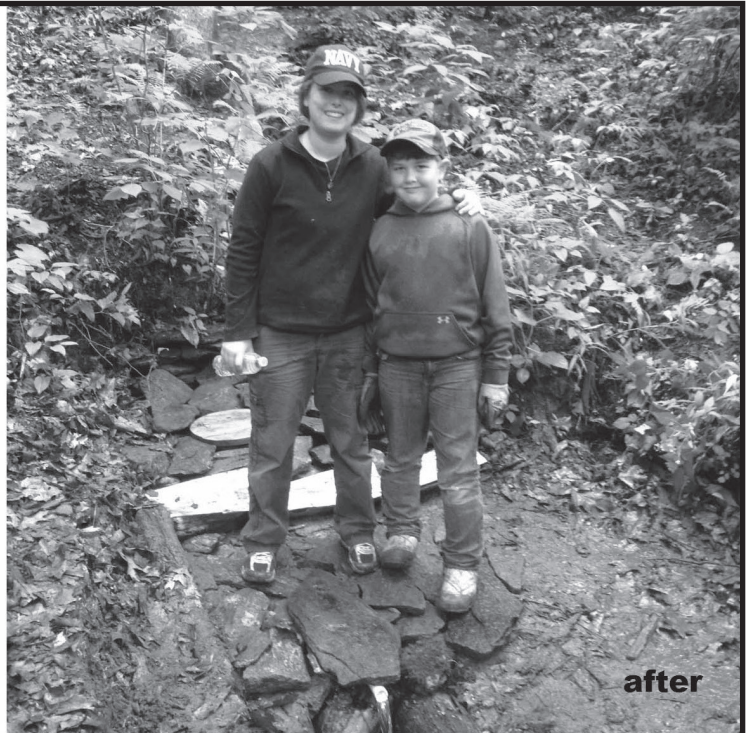
prevent erosion of the trail. However, the main project and the center of my Gold Award was the water source improvement at the nearby spring.



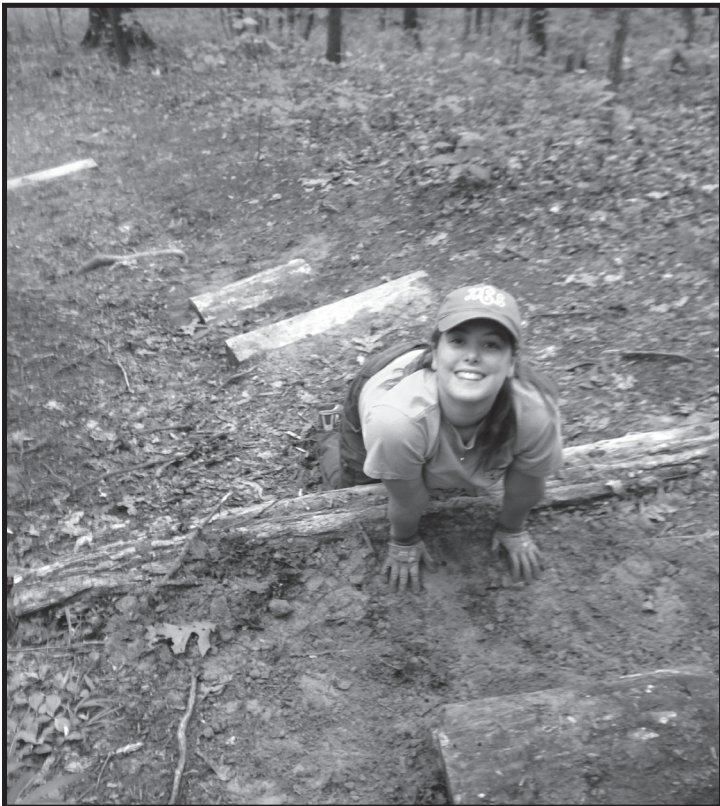
Before and after photos show improvements made to fire pits by Girl Scout Katie Crane.

There is a natural spring at the campsite but it was clogged with dirt, leaves, and sticks and was basically unusable for hikers who wanted to fill up their water bottles. To begin, we began by clearing out all of the dirt and leaves so that we could build up around it to create an easier access for hikers. We then used stones from a nearby creek to dam up the spring. It took

Trail near Whitewater River Corridor



Improvements made to the water source by Girl Scout Katie Crane at the Foothills Trail campsite are shown in these before and after photos. In photo at right, Katie displays finished project with helper Ethan Sexton from Cub Scout Pack 133 of Six Mile. Katie's Gold Award project was supported and approved by Duke Energy.



Katie Crane works on new steps near the Foothills Trail campsite that will make it easier for hikers to walk on the steep trail.

a lot of rocks! After building up the dam and the bank for an easier trail access, we were ready to insert a culvert. This would allow the water to pool inside. We then used more stones to sturdy it and beautify it. After that, a pipe was inserted into the culvert to allow a steady stream of water to flow out of it. We then built up around the pipe to sturdy it and allow people to walk over the length of it. The pipe then sticks out over some logs and creates a small, steady stream of water that is perfect for refilling canteens and water bottles.

The project took about seven months to complete and couldn't have been possible without donations from White's Culvert and Ace Hardware of Seneca. I would also like to thank the very supportive Foothills Trail Conference and especially Heyward Douglass, my advisor who encouraged and helped me throughout the duration of the project. I would like to thank East Clemson Baptist Church and the BSA Cub Scout Pack 133. I would especially like to thank my mother, who was at every workday, and my father, who worked harder than anybody at the workdays. I know that this project will last for years to come, and it was truly a blessing to work surrounded by nature and everything and everyone that is important to me. I hope that my project will impact hikers for many years to come. (Katie Crane, 16, is a rising junior at D.W. Daniel High School in Central and a member of Girl Scout Troop 202 of Clemson.) ❁



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New Jocassee field office opens in Eastatoee Valley

The S.C. Department of Natural Resources
has established a new Jocassee Gorges field office in
Eastatoee Valley in northern Pickens County. The
address of the new office is 1344 Cleo Chapman
Highway, Sunset, SC 29685.

The field office in Eastatoee Valley, adjacent to
the Shooting Tree Ridge entrance to Jocassee Gorges,
replaces the former Jocassee field office that was in
Laurel Valley, off US 178, along Eastatoee Creek, at the
site of the former Laurel Valley Lodge.

The new office houses Mark
Hall, Jocassee land manager
with the S.C. Department of
Natural Resources (DNR),
who is also a wildlife biologist
and forester. Ken Forrester
and Chris Gravely, DNR
wildlife technicians, are also
based at the office, and the
site includes storage facilities
for DNR equipment.



DNR



The new Jocassee field office in Eastatoee Valley is adjacent
to the Shooting Tree Ridge entrance to Jocassee Gorges on
Cleo Chapman Road. (Photo by Chris Gravely)

The telephone number for the Jocassee field
office is (864) 868-0281. Hall can be reached via e-mail
at HallM@dnr.sc.gov.